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National Weights and Measures Week March 1 - 7, 2008



National Weights and Measures Week, an event celebrated annually by weights and measures officials throughout the nation, commemorates the anniversary of the signing of the first weights and measures law in the United States on March 2, 1799.

This is the 209th Anniversary of the Office of Weights and Measures which was begun by a Congressional resolution requiring that each state receive a set of weights and measures standards.

During National Weights and Measures Week, the CDA recognizes the work of its Division of Inspection and Consumer Services (ICS) inspectors and metrologists. CDA inspectors use highly accurate equipment in their daily duties, including the inspection of scales, meters, and packaged products at supermarkets, warehouses, packing plants, storage facilities, and other retail stores. The metrology laboratory calibrates the standards used by CDA inspectors and licensed scale repair companies. Both protect the consumer and help ensure fairness in the marketplace.

According to Julie Zimmerman, CDA Director of ICS, Weights and Measures Week is intended to acquaint the public with the nature of this important service, which protects consumers and business interests from incorrect quantity determinations.

It is through uniformity in the methods and laws of certification and inspection of commodities and devices as well as uniform training procedures, equity will prevail in the market place. Scales and other measuring devices can become obsolete or out of adjustment just like any other mechanical equipment. Unlike many other devices, they continue to give quantity determinations, although incorrect, until they are tested, corrected, and replaced.

"It is the responsibility of weights and measures officials to make tests of commercially used weighing and measuring devices and report their condition to the owners," said Julie Zimmerman. "If the devices are correct, they are approved and sealed. If incorrect, they are rejected for use until corrected," she stated.

According to Zimmerman, weights and measures is one of the oldest and most important activities of government. Zimmerman said, "Every citizen and every business has a direct financial interest in seeing that all transactions are fair to both the buyer and seller." She estimated that the average family of four has a stake of \$600 or more per year in weights and measures enforcement. Businessmen have even greater reason for making that their scales and measuring devices are correct.

A small fraction of one per cent error can give away thousands of dollars worth of products and profits away.

For more information on National Weights and Measures Week, go to:

<http://www.ncwm.net>.

For more information on the Colorado Dept. of Agriculture programs, click on [Colorado Weights and Measures Programs](#) or [Colorado Metrology Laboratory](#).